



62 Years of DX-cellence

July 2010



BULLetin

*"If you need him
get in there and
work him"*

The Southern California DX Club Newsletter est. 1947

The Southern California DX Club is a group of dedicated men and women active in the amateur radio community who enjoy communicating over the air with other radio amateurs around the world.

The newsletter is published every month and is released to its members about the first of each month. Amateur and DX related letters, news and pictures are welcome and will be published as time and space permit.

Articles may be republished with the recognition of the author and the club. Reuse of copyrighted materials require the original author's permission.

Any questions regarding this newsletter or its articles should be addressed to the editor, Bill
n6rv@scdxc.org

Meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month at 7:30 PM except April, June and December.

Please check the club web site for events and details at
<http://www.scdxc.org>

If you are in the area please say hello on our repeater
W6AM/R145.48,(-) 100Hz PL



NEXT MEETING

July 8th 7:30 PM!

Bob Grimmick N6OX

Adventures From Far Away Places

• Visalia Holiday Inn 2011

Have you made your reservation for IDXC 2011?

• Vibroplex Keys

Jeff Wolf, K6JW, gives an interesting account of this classic key.

• DXpedition Announcements!

• Honda EU2000i 2 KW Generator!

Group Purchase Deal!

• Picnic Photos!

• We Need More input!

Reporters, Spurious Inputs, Historian!
Everyone has something to share!

Making friends all over the world using the magic of Amateur Radio.
Sponsors of the International DX Convention, since 1949



THE PREZ SEZ
Larry Mallek, K6YUI,
President – Southern California DX
Club
[**k6yui@scdxc.org**](mailto:k6yui@scdxc.org)

Well here it is the end of June and the bands are still not in the best condition.

This month has seen some DXpeditions, some Contests, the June picnic and then Field Day. I don't know about the rest of you but my favorite one was the SCDXC Picnic. WE had over 60 people show up, the weather that was going to be real hot was not hot at all so all the extra water we bought will be going to the Summer Bash. The clubs 3 great cooks did a fine job (yes I am one of them). The chicken with Keith's dry rub was just great as usual and many people were asking him how to get some.



John did it again with some real nice prizes that he bought and some that were left over from the convention. The winner, if by now you don't know, of the IC-7000 radio was Mark – K6FG with Square number 99 that he bought at the last moment. WOW is all I can say. He is enjoying playing with his new toy.

Since the low bands have not been too good for me I have been spending some time on 6 meters. Whenever I work a new grid or state and receive the QSL cards, I get excited as I did when working a new country.

Well that is it from me for this month so I will be looking forward to seeing everyone on July 8th at the club meeting.

Larry Mallek K6YUI
President SCDXC

Officer Guidelines
[**www.scdxc.org/download/Officer_Guidelines_Rev-A.pdf**](http://www.scdxc.org/download/Officer_Guidelines_Rev-A.pdf)

Treasurer's Report

Club financial information is available on request. Contact the treasurer.

Officer Guidelines

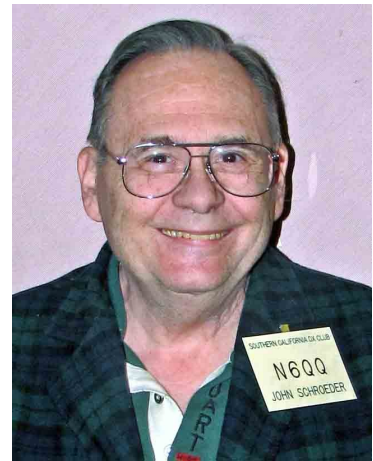
In 2000 Jim Zimmerman, N6KZ, and Chuck Constantine, KR6C generated a set of guidelines for club officers. Steve Shane, W6NRQ, headed up an effort to update these guidelines. The board reviewed and approved them. They are posted at the site

VICE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

John Schroeder, N6QQ,

Vice President – Southern California DX Club

n6qq@scdxc.org



DXer of The Year
Congratulations Ernie
N6HY!
The Clipperton
Award
Congratulations Rich
AE6RS!

Hello everyone. Last month was my first SCDXC picnic. I Had a great time. I met many hams that I haven't seen in a long time.

Many thanks to Larry, K6YUI, Ernie, N6HY and Keith, K6LD for their great cooking skills. Several other people join in the action to help put on this years picnic. It sure made it easy for me to put together this year's event. I am looking for any suggestions to improve the picnic for 2011. Email me at N6qq@msn.com with any ideas.

The July raffle prizes are ready to go. I found another 19" LED monitor. These LED sure have great contrast between the background and your image. Next item is a APC battery Backup Supply - rated at 1500 VPA or 875 watts. I use one with my IC-7800 at 200 watts along with the computer and monitors. I found a great digital camera, a Nikon Cool Pix rated at 10 mp, 3.6x Zoom and a 3" display. It will focus on 12 different faces at the same time.

I discovered a new site that will give you a complete look at your log for WPX, DXCC and Zones. There is a great deal of information that can be mined and analyzed in a standard ADIF file. Club Log can provide empirical propagation charts, and give back to its users the ability to find "wanted" DX spots, identify QSLing gaps, and perform other analysis of their logs which might be hard to do with normal logging software. Through Club Log, also hosts online log search systems for significant DXpeditions. Go to: <http://www.clublog.org/about.php>

If you want to see the Club Log in action drop by QRZ.com and click on Club Log and see if you are in my log. Go to: <http://www.qrz.com/db/N6QQ>

Contesting in July. There are 3 major contests to get into. For RTTY fans try the DL-DX RTTY contest on July 3-4. IARU HF Radio Championship on July 10-11. For 6 meter fans try the CQ WW VHF Contest July 17-18. Last year the 6 meter action in July of 2009 was great. So far this summer the E skip is showing lots of actions.

See you at the July meeting. I am looking forward to Bob's presentation on his latest exploits!

73, John N6QQ

Vice-President, SCDXC

June Prize Winners

K6FG	ICOM 7000
W6VX	LED MONITOR
N6RV	1 MILLION CANDLE FLASHLIGHT
W6HB	INKJET PRINTER
K6YUI	POWER DRILL
W6AUG	SWITCH
W6IRD	400' WIRE
K6LD	CALIPERS
N6HY	250 QSL CARDS
KC6TOD	KNIFE
W6ZPL	NIFFTY MANUALS CERTIFICATE
N6OT	????



THE EDITOR

Bill Kendrick, N6RV,
Editor – Southern California DX Club
n6rv@scdxc.org

New Members

I have to thank Keith, K6LD, for the great photo coverage of the meetings. We have a steady stream of visitors and new members every month. Welcome! We hope you find our unique club inviting and enjoyable. The group is exceptional and your membership will add to our quality!

Please welcome new members:

Gabriel Calfas
K6AWB

Diana Feinberg
AI6DF

Linda Souder
KD6HYN

Lloyd Hendrickson
K6NQY

David Lopez
KN6OP
Now
N6RI

Stan Thornton
K16QM

Randy Johnson
W6SJ

Dale Piedfort
KB7UB

Mary Gray
KH7VZ

Make sure you meet

Hello My Fellow DXers!

I hope everyone enjoyed the picnic. It was just right! The weather was fine. The food was great (thanks cooking crew) and the fellowship was spectacular. I met many hams who were visiting for the first time and I hope it is not the last.

I started editing this months newsletter a little later than usual. My concern was that I would not have much content again. My normal methodology for collecting input is taking the emails sent and placing them in a monthly BUL-Letin folder. When I opened the folder I was pleasantly surprised at all the great content people had sent me. I even forgot about the picnic photos. Bob, K6DDX, and Keith, K6LD, did a bang up job covering every angle of the picnic. Jeff submitted a wonderful article on his experiences with Vibroplex keys. Several DXpedition announcements were forwarded. Finally I was considering several articles. One I will put in next month will be on Six Meters. I am also considering an expose on each of the top ten most wanted countries from the West Coast. With the flow of recent emails regarding two very "interesting" individuals from DX lore I was considering an article on the subject. That one will not happen. Savory characters do make our hobby interesting. Giving too much attention to them accomplishes their intention to stay in the limelight. Please continue to send in the great articles and tidbits. It makes this job fun and interesting.

Right now as I type this column the receiver is tuned to 50.108. Jimmy, W6JKV is on his annual 6M DXpedition. This year he is operating from Saint Martin. So far I have heard part of his call pop up out of the noise twice. Hopefully he will get a good opening to our neck of the woods. Working Six Meters requires a very different sort of operating style. It is akin to operating 160 except everyone seems to have the 20 meter equivalent of an 80 foot boom or longer yagi at 160 to 320 feet and the DX signals are significantly weaker than 20. The upshot is you are trying to work whispery weak stations in the presence of signals that will cook the front end of your radio. For years coordination and consideration for the other guy has avoided conflict (*Yes, there are some who do not cooperate and make life terrible for the rest*). Unfortunately with the band population increasing it may not be possible to not step on toes. This will be the subject of an article next month. See all the latest DX info on the Rumors page.

RUMORS ON THE BAND

A plethora of announcements, rumors, and serious DX fun

With Summer upon us the bands will be noisy. Hopefully we will see an increase in solar activity. In any event keep an eye out for the rare ones.

Annabon Island DXpedition

The intrepid DXpeditioners Elmo, EA5BYP, and Javier, EA5KM did make it to Equatorial Guinea (3C9B) and Annobon Island (3C0C). They made a heroic effort to put these rare entities in the logs of hams everywhere. Their efforts to work the West Coast did not go unnoticed. Unfortunately a major solar flare, trouble with antennas blowing over, and a forced early departure reduced operating time and signal strength from Annobon. I was lucky enough to catch them on CW from 3C0C, a new mode for me. I did not hear 3C9B on their first stop. I needed this one for phone DXCC. Fortunately the early departure from 3C0C left them enough time to activate Equatorial Guinea again. I was able to capitalize on that untimely event and virtually killed two birds with one DXpedition. I hope everyone had a shot at working them. It was a little hectic!

Palestine

On the same note the Palestine DXpedition did a yeoman's job making every effort to work the West Coast. As usual though the sun did not cooperate. Signals were weak but the team persisted. During our window they stood by for West Coast stations and denied others who continuously called. Hopefully they landed in a few club member's logs.

The one detractor for both DXpeditions were the jammers and police. If you know any of these people then tell them to stop. If they do not turn them in!

Blue Information indicate particularly rare entities and **Red information** indicate SCDXC member attended DXpedition. As always you have to turn on your radio to work them.

Useful DX Sites

N0HR DXpedition Map
www.n0hr.com/wk34/

The DX Zone
www.dxzone.com/catalog/DX_Resources/

The Daily DX
www.dailydx.com/

Announced DX Ops
www.ng3k.com/misc/adxo.html

DXing.info
[/www.dxing.info/dxpeditions/](http://www.dxing.info/dxpeditions/)

DX 425 News
www.425dxn.org/dxped/

Dx-info.de
www.dx-info.de

DX Italia DX News
www.marioi2mqp.it

Call	QTH	Start Date	End Date	Information	Website
C5	Gambia	Now	7/5/2010	W7XU N0QJM W0SD W0OE Mainly 6 Meters	-
8Q7SR	Maldives	Now	8/8/2010	DL5JAG	-
VQ9JC	Chagos	Now	8/9/2010		-
VK0	Macquarie	Now	8/14/2010	ZL4PA SSB	-
FH8ND	Mayotte	Now	8/23/2010	F5PSL 80 - 6 SSB	-
ZS8M	Marion Island	Now	4/1/2011	ZS1HF	-
FP	St. Pierre	7/5/2010	7/14/2010	K9OT KB9LIE 160 - 6	-
FW5M	Wallis Island	7/14/2010	7/24/2010	JA2NQG, JH2BNL (TO2BNL), JI2UAY (FW5FM) 160-10 SSB, CW, RTTY	-
XT2EME	Burkina Faso	7/15/2010	8/7/2010	HB9CVC, HB9HLV, HB9EOU CW, SSB, PSK	-
S79BWW	Seychelles	7/17/2010	7/31/2010	CT1BWW All Bands All Modes	-
S79SAL	Seychelles	7/17/2010	7/31/2010	EA2RC All Bands All Modes	-
A2	Botswana	8/16/2010	8/19/2010	W2LPL W2DBL /A2 SSB	-

DX ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Celebrate the Successes of Our Fellow Members!

Updates

Sharon, K6IRD, Tim, K6GEP, and Marv, K6HCJ, all provided updates to their standings. Thank you for the emails! I know that there were many more in the line at Visalia. Keep those cards and letters coming!

SCDXC WAZ and DXCC Standings (N6RV)

The first of the two large numbers represent the number of confirmed zones on the 9 HF bands 160-10 (less 60 meters). The next column contain the following codes:

M **Mixed**
P **Phone**
C **CW**
R **RTTY**
5 **5 Band**

If you have any information to post please email me:

N6RV@SCDXC.ORG

WAZ STANDINGS

	9B / 5B	Awards
EU7SA	355 / 200	M/5
N6AW	355 / 200	M/P/C/5
WA5VGI	352 / 200	M/P/C/5
W6VX	352 / 199	
K6FG	344 / 200	M/P/C/R/5
W6SR	342 / 200	M/P/C//5
W8DX	339 / 200	M/5
K6YUI	337 / 200	M/P/C/R/5
W6YOO	303 / 200	M/P/C/5
K6YRA	280 / 200	P/5
KC6X	278 / 200	M/C/5
K6LD	271 / 172	M/P
N6RV	266 / 173	M/P/C
KR6C	264 / 166	M/C
KJ6Y	261 / 172	
WD6L	248 / 200	M/P/5
K6SY	246 / 173	P
K6GXO	227 / 193	M
N6OU	220 / 200	M/5
N6DHZ	214 / 160	P
KH6DX/m	210 / 184	
K2PLF	191 / 191	
K6KII	191 / 177	M
W6NRQ	180 / 147	M/P
WA6BOB	152 / 136	M
K6IRA	118 / 102	
W3SE	102 / 112	
K6VC	96 / 96	P
W6EA	92 / 86	
N6VNI	86 / 64	
KA6TTV	82 / 67	
N6UC	78 / 78	M
W6IRD	67 / 64	M/P
N6GIL	49 / 43	
W6DCK	40 / 40	P
WB6PSY	40 / 40	P
K6JW	40 / 40	M/P
K6IRD	40 / 40	
K6YR	39 / 39	
KT6LA	36 / 36	
NZ6L	36 / 36	
N6HE	36 / 34	
W4EF	29 /	
N6AWD		M
N6HC		M/P/C
KB6KTV		P
W6OES		M
K8RD		C
K6UNR	/ 200	M/P/5

DXCC STANDINGS

	TOT / CUR
K6KII	382 / 338
JA1BK	377 / 338
K6YRA	372 / 338
N6UC	365 / 338
K6YUI	360 / 338
K6EXO	360 / 335
N6AW	355 / 337
W6HT	354 / 338
W6SR	353 / 338
WA6WZO	352 / 338
K8RD	351 / 338
K5KT	350 / 338
K6FG	350 / 338
K6GXO	350 / 338
N6RV	349 / 336
K2PLF	349 / 338
N6RV	349 / 336
K6IPV	349 / 331
W8DX	348 / 337
W6OM	347 / 337
W6AUG	345 / 338
KC6X	344 / 337
W6OES	344 / 329
W6KK	343 / 338
W6VX	343 / 338
N6AWD	343 / 336
K6LD	343 / 338
W6DCK	342 / 336
WB6PSY	342 / 333
EU7SA	340 / 336
KB6KTV	340 / 335
W6YOO	340 / 334
WA5VGI	342 / 336
KR6C	337 / 335
N6OU	334 / 329
N6HC	333 / 338
K6UNR	332 / 331
W6QE	332 / 324
W6IRD	327 / 324
KJ6Y	327 / 323
K6SY	312 / 310
AD6KQ	299 / 299
WD6L	295 / 292
W6HB	291 / 285
N6DHZ	286 / 284
W6NRQ	284 / 284
N7CQQ	268 / 266
K6JW	253 / 251
K6YR	244 / 244
K6GEP	239 / 226
K6DJ	236 / 236
K6HCJ	235 / 235
K6GEP	229 / 226
K6IRD	228 / 228
K6VC	227 / 227
WA6BOB	202 / 198
KT6LA	161 / 161
N6VNI	158 / 158
KA6TTV	145 / 145
N6HE	145 / 140
K6OGO	142 / 142
W6EA	138 / 138
W6WVW	134 / 134
W4EF	132 / 132
K6LX	125 / 125
WA6NOL	112 / 111
NZ6L	27 / 27

2011 South Orkneys DXpedition



June 23, 2010

The Microlite Penguins DXpedition team is pleased to announce the major equipment sponsors for our upcoming South Orkneys DXpedition.

The world-famous Elecraft will be providing us with a full set of K3 transceivers. Light in weight but heavy on performance, the K3 was the obvious choice for this challenging polar DXpedition. We will also be taking along a set Acom 1010 amplifiers, which will help overcome some of the low-band difficulties and help keep our signals above the noise.

The main force behind our antenna field is DX Engineering, who will be supplying VP8ORK with brand new hardware for a complete set of verticals from 40m through 10m.

Complementing the DX Engineering antenna field is SteppIR, who will also be providing two of their rugged BigIR vertical antennas. This will allow us maximum flexibility with propagation, and two stations active within the same band whenever possible.

We will also have with us the "gold-standard" in extreme location DXpedition antennas: The Battle Creek Special. This proven low-band performer will provide the backbone to the VP8ORK effort on 80 and 160, ensuring you hear us. And so we can hear YOU, we'll also have one of DX Engineering's 4-square receive antenna systems.

And for additional firepower on the low bands, we will have 60 foot and 85 foot Spiderbeam fiberglass masts supporting vertical wires tuned for 80 and 160. Again, this allows simultaneous CW and SSB operation on 80 and gives us redundancy on 160.

Additional sponsors include Primus, who has graciously donated over 3000 feet of LMR-400 coax, and RigExpert Canada, who has come through with a full set of interfaces for our K3s. With this fantastic range of equipment and some of the most experienced operators ever assembled, VP8ORK is set to be the premier DX event of 2011.

Major DXpeditions to polar regions come at a heavy price. Only with your generous donations can we ensure this adventure is a success. Please consider donating at www.vp8o.com

73 and see you on the bands!

The Microlite Penguins DXpedition Team



NEWS

National Wildlife Refuge Week 2010

Sharing the Good News via Amateur Radio

2010 National Wildlife Refuge Week is set for October 10-16, and Amateur Radio will again be helping to mark this event.

The goal is to combine your communication skills with your enjoyment of the outdoors to help others learn about the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Only authorized, responsible access to refuges is sanctioned by this event.



To operate from a National Wildlife Refuge:

1. Review the special event rules and guidance information available at www.nwrweek-radio.info, formulate a proposal the manager of the refuge you intend to activate and contact NWR Week Amateur Radio at info@nwrweek-radio.info.
2. Obtain permission from the refuge manager to operate within the refuge. Upon receiving approval, submit your operating plan to info@nwrweek-radio.info to have your operation listed on our web site.

Operating Tips:

- Operate one day or the entire week, subject to the refuge manager's authorization.
- Use your own call sign, a club call sign or a 1x1 special event call sign.
- Use SSB, PSK31, RTTY, CW, etc., and describe refuge features and wildlife to those you contact.



Be a good steward of the refuge. Your presence in wildlife areas should be passive, minimizing impact and leaving habitat unaltered.

Several ham operators who have experience operating from refuges are available to answer questions and offer suggestions.

Contact the 2010 National Wildlife Refuge Week Amateur Radio coordinator at info@nwrweek-radio.info.

SPURIOUS OUTPUTS

Comments, Announcements, and Interesting Tid-Bits Submitted by Members

Vanuatu 2010 DXpedition News Release (ZL3TE)

In co-operation with ODXG, a group of four Australian amateurs will be activating Vanuatu (YJ0) from 27th August until 2nd September. The accommodation and flights are booked and the team are waiting on callsign allocation from the Vanuatu government. Chris VK3QB (Leader), Allan VK2CA, Luke VK2HJ and Brenton VK3CBV will spend six days and nights working the HF bands from the island of Efate – as well enjoying some of the sites of this beautiful country.

More details will be released in the coming 2 weeks, including web site details, QSL details and likely bands/modes. However, at this stage the team plans to keep things simple with two HF stations limited to 100 watts and vertical and wire dipole antennas.

For more information please contact Chris VK3QB vk3qb@wia.org.au

Bill Horner, VK4FW
PO box 612
Childers, 4660
Australia

2011 IDXC Holiday Inn Reservations (K6SY)

Earlier last month Bill, N6RV, sent out an email regarding reservations at the Holiday Inn. It is repeated here for those who are not on the mailing list. Reservations may be made direct with the Hotel in the usual manner will begin at **10:00 AM, Friday June 18.**

There is another link on the web site that enables you to reserve on line. You may call as usually for reservations directly with the hotel beginning at 10:00 AM Friday, June 18. The number is 559-651-5000.

Call Sign Change (KN6OP)

New member David Lopez changed his call sign from KN6OP to N6RI. Being an N6R... I can attest that the call sign will increase your probability of working the rare ones by 50%. Of course 98% of all statistics are fabricated! Way to go David! Enjoy the new call sign.

Club Log Website (WB6PSY)

In the vice president's column John, N6QQ, mentioned the Club Log website. Gary also recommended it. Here is his comments on the site.

Here's a link that might be useful to club members. I joined a while back and it's really a wonderful DX tool. I had dozens of log entries that were wrong that got challenged. LoTW is a great tool but doesn't challenge wrong entities. Take a look:

<http://www.clublog.org/about.php>

SPURIOUS OUTPUTS

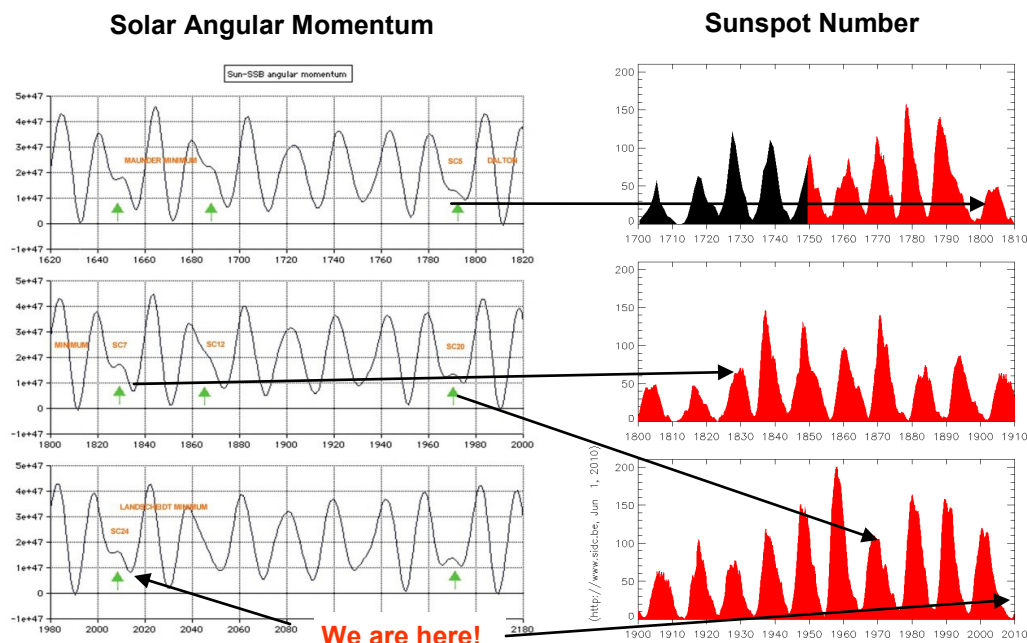
Comments, Announcements, and Interesting Tid-Bits Submitted by Members

Sunspot Discovery (W6HB & W6DOE)

The 11-year sunspot cycle appears to be heavily influenced by the positions of Uranus and Neptune. This discovery makes solar cycle predictions possible and indicates that solar cycles 24 & 25 will have "heavily reduced sunspot activity" and therefore disappointing HF DX opportunities. We are currently in solar cycle 24.

<http://arxiv.org/abs/1005.5303v1>

(This article came from the CGC Communicator. The link leads to a website containing a pdf document. The document is very technical but the graphs clearly explain what has been happening over the period that solar activity has been tracked. It appears that a perturbation in solar angular momentum caused by the alignment of Uranus and Neptune, the gas giants, occurs around a low cycle. Certain planetary alignments results in a grand minima. The severity of the perturbation depends on the alignment. The article indicates that we should expect a low cycle but not a grand minima...Editor)



Honda EU2000i Generator Deal! (K6SY)

Mel received an email from the NCCC on a group buy deal for the Honda EU2000i generator. It looks like a several hundred dollar savings. If 10 or more club members are interested and bring their checks to the next club meeting (July) Mel will order them. There is an ad in the July 2010 QST, page 112 for the same model EU2000i Honda generators as QST special for \$889.00 from Mayberry. The Mayberry price is about \$30.00 more than the e-mail offer and doesn't include the cover. The generator is a 2000 watt unit at 120 VAC (no 220 VAC) and uses Honda's inverter technology for a nice clean sine wave. Those interested in buying one will need to bring a check to the next club meeting (July) or mail Mel one before. Checks payable to the SCDXC. Mel will deposit the checks to the club account and have Cathy write a club check for the order. If we don't get ten (10) Mel will return the checks. Please contact Mel if interested.

MY LOVE AFFAIR...WITH VIBROPLEX

Jeff Wolf, K6JW



CW is dead. Long live CW!

Back in 1958, when I first became licensed as a Novice, the requirements for that basic, introductory ticket to the world of personal radio communication included being able to send and receive International Morse code at the blinding rate of (gasp!) 5 words per minute. It was a challenge for this then-12 year old boy, but I managed it and, once on the air with my WW II surplus J-38 straight key, made some wonderful contacts. Oh, they were all U.S. and mostly pretty local, but for me it was terrifically exciting.

The Novice license back then was valid only for a year and it could not be renewed. The FCC rule was “up or out”, so I had to upgrade if I wanted to remain on the air. Some of you have probably read or heard my account of how I eventually did upgrade through Technician to General and, later to Advanced and Extra and, for those who haven’t, I’m sure you’ll suffer though the story one of these days, but that is not what we’re about here, now. No, right now I’m going to tell you about my torrid romance with...the Vibroplex company. So suffice it to say that, at the age of 14, I did finally pass my General Class exam.

Now, for those of you who might think that Vibroplex is the company that makes those quarter-gobbling motel bed shakers, allow me to provide a bit of history.

Early in the history of telegraphy, the only devices available to send code were conventional, “straight” telegraph keys, the kind one pumps up and down for each “dit” and “dah”. As professional telegraphers spent longer and longer hours at their keys, they developed ligament strain and carpal tunnel syndrome, a set of symptoms that was known as “glass arm”. In 1902, a man named Horace G. Martin patented an invention which he called the Martin Autoplex, which was an attempt to get around the problem that used batteries in a sort of an electro-mechanical setup to enable sending dits in a more automated way. This eventually evolved in 1904 into Martin’s second patented device, a “semi-automatic” key that sent dits repeatedly using a vibrating arm set in motion simply by tapping a paddle sideways with the thumb. Dahs were sent individually by pressing the other side of the paddle, a second articulated lever, in the opposite direction. This device, marketed by Martin through his United Electrical Manufacturing Company, is what became known as the “bug”. In 1908, U.E.M. went out of business, but Martin’s invention, which became known formally as the “Vibroplex”, was popular and its marketing was taken over by J.E. Albright, who formed The Vibroplex Company in 1915.

Since that time, Vibroplex has had several owners, and the company is still in business today, being owned and operated by its recent purchaser, Scott Robbins, W4PA, formerly of Ten-Tec. The company is presently based in Knoxville, TN.

One day, while studying for my General Class license, I was looking around the local electronics store – Valley Electronics on Sherman Way in Reseda, CA – when I caught sight of something I'd never seen before, something so shimmering in the display case, sensuous, and irresistible that I was instantly smitten. And what was this object of my lust? It was a magnificent chromed Vibroplex Deluxe bug just like this one:



I knew from the moment I saw it that I would have to own it and, shortly after passing my General Class exam, I anted up my life's savings – about \$60 -- and took the beauty home.

For those who have never tried to use a bug, let me say that it takes lots of patience to set it up properly and then master its use. Lots and lots of patience, actually. But that 14 year old kid was motivated, and soon I was using my bug on the air.

Time passed, and for most of my college and med school years I became radio-inactive. Once out of school, however, I dived back into the hobby and once again got on the air with my beloved Vibroplex. By now, however, most dedicated CW operators seemed to have adopted another type of keying that had been around for awhile but was becoming very popular: iambic keying. Instead of the semiautomatic, weighted spring mechanism of the bug, iambic “paddles” had simpler, independently operated levers, each of which activated it's own circuit, one for dits and one for dahs. Thus, both dits *and* dahs could be sent automatically and, if the two arms were pressed (“squeezed”) simultaneously, an “iambic” rhythm would be generated for as long as the arms were held: di-dahdiahdidah....This made sending CW so effortless – it was simply wonderful!

I *had* to have one of these gadgets. Back to Vibroplex for their Iambic Deluxe:



Being a true ham means being a tinkerer, however, and I found the Vibroplex Iambic to be ergonomically awkward. So, I lowered it by replacing the stock feet with shorter feet, and I made a new set of finger pieces that extended inferiorly, making the whole apparatus easier to operate without having to cock up the wrist uncomfortably. My re-working was published in CQ Magazine, following which Vibroplex contacted me about the finger pieces. They now market them as the “K6JW Conversion Paddles”, and every new Vibroplex Iambic paddle comes with an enclosed reprint of my original article (written under my former callsign, WA6DAL). Here’s a photo of the modified Iambic finger pieces on a Vibroplex Iambic Standard (black base) paddle:



There are many other Iambic paddles on the market made by other manufacturers, and some are exquisite and very expensive. Over the years, I’ve owned many, including Brown, Kent, WBL, Bencher, Schurr, and Begali. For some reason, though, I always gravitate back to Vibroplex. That young kid who stood mesmerized before the showcase at Valley Electronics back in 1960, well, he never grew up and he never fell out of love with the romance of the Vibroplex marque or the unique look and feel of the company’s products. In fact, I have only one great regret in this vein, and it is that I foolishly sold my original Vibroplex Deluxe semiautomatic bug many years ago, and I so wish I still had it in my shack to admire today.

73 es gud DX,

Jeff, K6JW

NOTHING BEATS AN SCDXC PICNIC



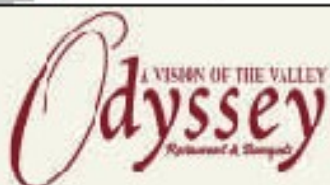


Photos by Keith, K6LD, and Bob, K6DDX

This may be early but it is never too early to pencil it in on your calendar!



SCDXC
HOLIDAY PARTY
December 5, 2010



Date: December 5, 2010
Time: 11:00 am to 4:00 pm
Where: The Odyssey
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Cut registration form here



Registration Form
The Odyssey Restaurant
December 5, 2010

Deadline for returning Registration Form: November 22, 2010

Name: _____ Callsign: _____

Number of guest including yourself _____

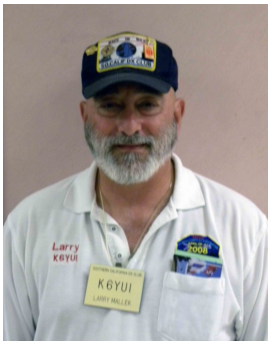
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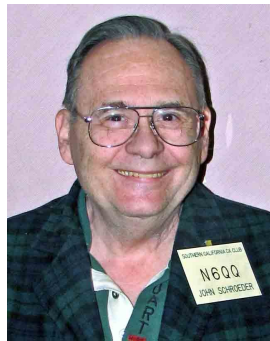
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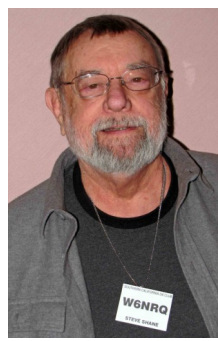
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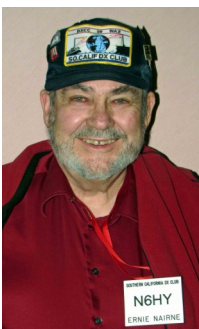
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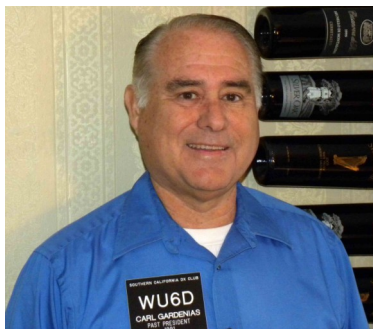
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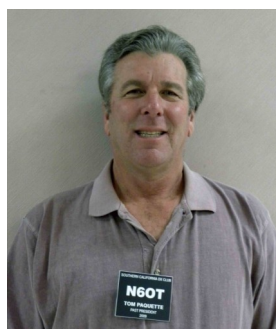
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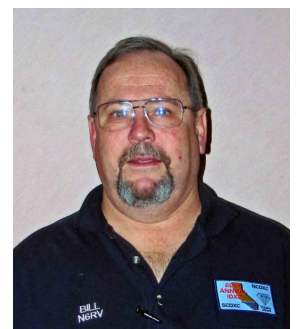
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